18

THE VERDICT of the WISE:

Or, the Opinion of

DAVID

AND

SOLOMON:

About the chief *Happiness* of Man;

The one Denying, that it doth consist in any worldly thing:
The other Averring, that it doth consist in GOD alone.
Solomon's Opinion being delivered in way of an Abstract of his Book, called *Ecclesiastes*.
David's Opinion being delivered in a Paraphrase on the 23*d Psalm*.

By a Minister of the Gospel.

---

1 John 2. 16, 17. *All that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life——passeth away.*

Colos. 3. 11. *Christ is all, and in all.*

Printed in the Year, 1689.

The ARGUMENT.

ALL Men would happy be,
But few do see,
What is True Happiness,
The most but guess,
And in their guesses Err.

Some dream it lies in Pleasures,
some deem in Treasures,
Some their Kings Ear to have
fondly conceive;
But Sol'mon doth averr,
That thy felicitie
can never be
In such uncertain things,
as take them wings,
And leave thee to lament
thy time mispent
And lost, in seeking losses.

Nil non mortale tenemus.
Non est mortale quod opto,
Christus mihi cuncta perenne.

BRITISH MUSEUM

An Abstract of the Book of *Solomon*, called *Ecclesiastes*.

SECTION I.

FOnd man! why charm'd? why wheedled so?
To seek with an inflamed heart,
Those things which will creat thy wo,
And 'midst thy pleasures make thee smart,
Look round about on every hand,
Emblems and Beacons thou may spy,
From whence thou may'st well understand,
Times pleasures are a vanity.
This is the Theme I here design
To undeceive thy charmed mind,
And make thee see how vain a thing,
To seek what thou can never find,
To wit *Contentment*, here below,
Where every thing we do espy
Is full of grief, and full of wo,
And subject unto vanity.
All that thou hears, tastes, feels, and sees,
Is vanity of vanities.

(2)

Silver and *Gold* are but refin'd
And purified crumbs of clay,
Though heavy mettals, yet they find
Sometimes swift wings to fly away.
And if they stay, they prove a snare
And Nurserie of many sins,
That hind'ring us of heavenly fare,
Is almost every body finds:
For when we would aspire on high,
In sp'ritual raised contemplations,
Our mind that's clog'd with love of clay,
Finds no vent for such elevations;
But rather is enthral'd.
All that, &c.

(3)

Orchards and *Gardens* when they smile,
In summer time, or in the spring,
Are very pretty for a while,
Especi'ly there if Birds do sing.

But this while doth not long abide,
A winter frost meets all their grace;
The birds, the fruits, the flow'rs do fade,
Almost ye will mistake the place
Where they were wont to grow.
Yea, other pleasures we compare
Vnto a fragrant pretty flow'r,
Whose glory and whose beauty rare,
Doth fade and flourish in an hour.
All that, &c.

(4)

Fabricks of Alabaster stone,
And of the Oak or Cedar gay,
Go all to desolation,
As well as cottages of clay.
Yea, *Castles* with their walls of brass,
And *Tow'rs* that mount up in the skies,
As if they had been brittle glass,
In weeping rubbish ruin'd lies.
Kingdoms and *Monarchies* we see
Transform'd, and broken in a trace,
And crown'd heads have their destinie,
That puts them from their royal place;
Yea, these who Kingdoms do possess
In greatest-like Tranquillitie,
If we their griev'd thoughts could but guess,
Or did into their inwards see;
Surely we would not much repine.
That we're not *Kings*, or *Emperours*:
For countrey *Peasants* daily find,
Far more contented quiet hours.
All that, &c.

(5)

Pomp and *preferment* to the eye
Looks big, and carries a brave glance;
And ev'ry man pierc'd with envy,
Alone all honours would enhance;
But oft we see the wheel turn round,
And *Fortunes Darlings* suddenly
Laid low, and creeping on the ground,
In much disgrace and misery;
Yet ev'ry day we may behold
Men charmed and demented so,

t all they ſee, or can be told,
n't ſcar them from their neighbours wo,
ſtill they dream their policie,
greater wit will them advance,
their unlook'd for Deſtinie
ke them take ſuch another dance,
others, down the brae.
ll that, &c.

(6)

ſe alſo, and the *Vulgars breath*
way of popular applauſe,
ne day hath its birth and death,
n as light people will and pleaſe;
t many times blind partial Zeal,
t ſolid Reaſon doth them ſway,
paſs their cenſure good or ill,
d change what both they think and ſay:
that a wiſe man won't regard
e vulgars clatters *pro* or *con*,
r oft diſgrace is their reward,
at court their light opinion.
All that, &c.

(7)

ends are a comfort, while they ſtand
friendſhip conſtant, true and faſt;
t many take thee by the hand,
hoſe hearty kindneſs will not laſt;
time of their proſperity
ey'l faun and flatter pleaſantly:
t when thou'rt in adverſity,
eir help and love they will deny.
oſt meaſure friendſhip by their gain,
r as thou canſt their ends promove;
falſe friends! friendſhip who ſo ſtain,
not to love me for my love.
A'l that, &c.

(8)

o brag of *Noble Blood's* a blot,
nworthy of a gen'rous mind,
obility conſiſteth not
a continued ancient Line.
true Nobilitats, and gives
Name that will endure for ay;

A vertuous man though dead, he lives,
When noble Titles rot away.
All that, &c.

(9)

The best *Endowments of the mind*,
For Learning Sciences and Arts,
We have observed sore declin'd;
Yea, men of the most pregnant parts,
Their Wit to Folly turn'd, their fast
And faithful mem'rie, weak'ned sore,
So that their counsels have been cast,
Who past for *Oracles* before;
Their fluent Tongue, and *Eloquence*,
Which sweetly did perswade and sway,
To swear unto their minde and sense,
Has faln into a great decay.
All that, &c.

(10)

Beauty is a deceitful thing,
Ensnareth by its fairded charms,
But to fond mortals thence does spring
Black and innumerable harms:
In sense of which whiles too too late,
When fading beautie's gone away
What some before admir'd, they hate
With a pathetick enmity.
All that, &c.

(11)

In borrow'd things, why dost thou glore,
Thy painted *Garbs* and *Ornaments*,
Are come of Birds, or Worms, yea more,
Are of some Beasts the *Excrements*.
Perhaps when but a short while worn,
Their paintry and thy glory's mar'd,
If griezed, sullied, or torn,
Yet fools from foolries won't be scarr'd.
All that, &c.

(12)

Those carnal *pleasures* of the *flesh*,
Which are the sweetest, as some say,
Are but a momentany flash,
No violent thing endureth ay,

And

nd frequently they ſmartly find,
ho take too lib'rally ſuch pleaſures,
hat fearful tortures fills their minde
extraordinary meaſures:
nd alſo bodily diſeaſes,
ome filthy paltrons do contract,
heir ſtrength and fleſh that ſadly ſquizes
ike to the plague, or cruel rack,
hich buries all the memorie
f ſweeteſt moments e're they had,
hotteſt fits of Venerie;
r when moſt paſſionatly mad,
o gratifie their luſts,
All that, &c.

(13)

Muſick of *Inſtrument*, or *Voice*,
ome fondly do conceit and love,
et their moſt ſhril and taking Noiſe,
oth but an *airie pleaſure* prove;
he ſweeteſt ſounds are like a dream,
hat lightly comes, and lightly goes,
o gratifie the ſenſe doth ſeem,
ut preſently upon the cloſe
ſwallow'd up and loſt.
All that, &c.

(14)

erhaps thou haſt varietie
f *well-dreſs'd Meats* to pleaſe thy taſte,
nd does thy palat ſatisfie
v'n unto *Epicuriſh* waſte.
ſwiniſh creature wilt thou think,
ow very ſoon thy morſels ſweet,
vaniſh in a noiſome ſtink,
r turn to dirt among thy feet;
o what before thou dideſt love,
nd ſwallow down full pleaſantly,
t length a *Vomiter* may prove,
n which thou canſt not caſt thine eye,
ithout a bock or preiſs.
All that, &c.

(15)

And
ome have their *Goſſips* and *Caballs*,
ith whom they chapterly conveen,

To

To tell the news, or what befals,
As they have been inform'd, or seen;
But ere they part, you may behold,
Good healths full merrily go round,
The freshest news then to be told
Is, none of them's *fresh* to be found;
And is it not a bonnie sight,
As ere you saw in *Comedie*,
To see kind Gossips flite and fight,
And, like Darts, Stoups and Chandlers fixe;
O cruel Cups! strong Liquors are
Both Fire and Water, moe do fall
In this unfear'd *Man-slaying-war*,
Than by the sword so fear'd by all.
All that, *&c.*

(16)

How many golden precious *hours*
In *Games* do some unwisely spend,
Which all created Arts and Pow'rs
Cannot restore, or to us lend,
When we have greatest need.
Have we not known some howl and cry,
O! had I those sweet hours again,
That I have lost most foolishly,
For which I'm now in grievous pain;
I would improve them with more care,
For better uses and intents,
Than Games, or vaging here and there,
Or visits, and vain complements.
Time, Time, O Time! how dost thou fly,
Unthrifty man for future minde,
In Summer time to make thy Hay,
Time lost, again thou'l never find,
All that, *&c.*

(17)

Boast not of *youthful years*, nor boast
Of *health* of *body*, nor of *might*,
A short whiles *sickness* may thee post
From Time, to an eternal Night;
Mind thou must die, but when, or where,
Thou canneſt not divine, or tell,
The Lambs-skin often at the Fair
You'l find as soon's the Sheep's to sell;

d *Parents*, hence don't idolize
r pleasant *pretty Babies*, why?
alous God you may displease,
snatch your idols soon away.
daily some do find.
All that, &c.

(18)

w are times *pleasures* thus so vain,
foolish and uncertain *Toyes*?
how demented are most men.
o seek them more than Heavens *joyes*?
erefore deluded, blinded Wight,
sublunary things despise,
d with a mind firm and upright,
k for thy portion 'bove the skies.
only *Heavenly Treasures* can,
ide the Waters and the Fire;
s only Heavenly *pleasures*, Man,
n satisfie the Souls desire;
d would'st thou have chief *Happiness*,
his only is the solid way,
y Minde and Mem'ry to possess,
ith this persuasion night and day,
hat *Iesus* is our *all in all*;
nd *Godliness* our greatest gain,
ur greatest woe in *sin* to fall,
nd *worldly pleasures* end in *pain*,
All that thou hears, tastes, feels and sees,
Is Vanitie of Vanities.

A Paraphrase on the 23d Psalm.

The God of *Iacob* doth me keep,
s one of His peculiar sheep,
ll that is needful will he give,
hat I may comfortably live.
In pastures green adorn'd with flowrs,
nd watered with heav'nly showrs,
Where nothing is that may molest,
He makes me quietly to rest;
nd leads me water-courses by,
Which softly glyde and steal away.

3 And

3 And when my spʳit is out of frame,
He soon restoreth it again,
In paths of truth He doth me guide,
And holds me when I'm like to slide,
Or if *I* wander from his hand,
Turns me to where his flock doth stand,
And all this freely 'cause he wills,
Though *I* deserve the contrair ills.
4 Yea though it should become my fate,
To walk in desarts desolate,
Or to pass through deaths irksom vail,
Which sable shadows overvail,
Yet *I* would fix'd and fearless be,
Not dreading any *Je*'pardie;
For still is with me Iacob's God,
Comforting with his staff and rod.
5 Moreover, in view of my foes,
His care and faithfulness He shows,
Preparing largely for my need,
And comfort too; also my head
He doth anoint, as at great feasts
Of old they did anoint their guests;
Yea my lot so replenisht is
With blessings in varieties,
That my cup ever runneth o're
Still furnisht from His endless store.
6 I'm sure His goodness and His grace
Will drop down from His holy place,
And like a stream still follow me,
While shal in time my dwelling be,
And in His Temple will *I* stay,
Sounding His praises ev'rie day.

An Appendix of devout Desires to God.

Hail Iesu, sweetest Lord,
What offering I can afford,
Behold, I bring;
All that I have, and am,
My self, my goods, my parts, my name,
Yea, ev'rie thing,
I sacrifice to Thee,
With heart and hand most free,
As is Thy due
From Greek and Iew,

O Lord, forgive
All mine Iniquities;
And if it may thy goodneſs pleaſe,
O let me live:
By Law I'm dead,
And shal undoubtedlie
Be damn'd to all eternitie,
Without remeid;
leſs my ſins, moſt gracious Lord,
ou pardon of thy Own accord.

Vhen I am all alone,
In contemplation,
me have thy ſweet *company*,
o quicken my Devotions,
nd clarifie my Notions,
out the Trin-une *Deity*,
hat I may Thee adore,
ls like the ſaints in Glore,
his my preſent temp'ral ſtate
wants and weakneſs will admit.

moſt juſt I ſhould Thee love,
d with my Love joyn filial fear,
Leſt I offend,
auſe Thou cameſt from above
o this noiſom lower ſphere,
Thy blood to ſpend
me, ev'n ſuch a wretch as I,
oſe ſins are of the Crimſon dye.

rd, give me a contented mind,
h whatſoever I do find,
hy good will ſhould be my lot;
at whether rich, or whether poor,
Croſſes, if I muſt endure,
pine or murmure I may not;
at ſo internal peace I may enjoy,
atever outward troubles may annoy.

Help me to be deny'd
To worldly pleaſures.

Let

Let me be fortify'd,
Against the measures
That sin and satan take,
To winnow me,
Or my faith for to shake,
That's plac't on Thee.

Lord, daily me prepare and fit,
For death and for eternity,
That at Thy right Hand I may sit,
With joy in the great Iudgment day,
And afterwards I may
Eternal happiness
Most peacefully possess
Without an enemy,
My heavenly rest
For to molest.

Lord, Zions cause remember,
And with a voice of thunder
Rebuke her foes,
And them oppose,
Till Thou consume them into Tinder.
Make her exalt the horn
'Bove all who do her scorn
And make us see
Prosperitie
Her palaces fill and adorn.
That in Thee Iacob may rejoyce,
And utter with triumphant voice,
Sweet songs of praise,
For endless dayes.

FINIS.

BRITISH
14 DE 89
MUSEUM